THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir. No such proposal is under consideration for setting up a Multi-Purpose Cultural Complex at Majuli Island.

(c)The Department of Culture actively encourages organizations under its administrative control to undertake activities and programmes which help to preserve, disseminate and nourish the cultural heritage of the North Eastern Region, including Majuli Island. For instanqe.North Eastern Zonal Cultural Centre and Department of Cultural Affairs, Assam jointly organized Rongali Bihu Festival at Majuli on April 17-18,2002. Cultural Troupes from other Zonal Cultural Centres also participated in cultural programmes in Majuli Mahotsav 2002 organised in November, 2002.

New tourist centres in U.P.

†740. PROF. M. M. AGARWAL: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) what is the amount proposed to be allocated project-wise for the development of new tourist centres in Uttar Pradesh; and

(b) what are the details of steps to be taken by Government to complete the said projects on time?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) The following development works worth Rs. 295.00 lakhs have been sanctioned for Uttar Pradesh during current financial year under the project for Integrated Development of Vaishali-Nalanda-Rajgir-Bodhgaya-Varanasi Tourism Circuit:

SI. No.	Items of work	Amount Sanctioned (Rs. in lakhs)
(i)	Development of facilities and landscaping around Maharani Laxmi Bai Memorial, Varanasi.	90.00
(ii)	Development of Dhammacakkappavattana Udyan at Sarnath	200.00
(iii)	Signages TOTAL:	5.00
		295.00

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b)The State Government has been requested to extend all necessary infrastructural support for the project and Central Public Works Department has been asked to implement the project expeditiously.

Promotion of Eco-Tourism

741. SHRI SURENDRA LATH: Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to introduce a country-wide programme to promote Eco-tourism;

(b) if so, by when the programme would be implemented;

(c) whether any State has taken any step in this regard with the assistance of Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the programme drawn up by Government in this regard for 2003-04?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN): (a) and (b)The Government have announced a National Tourism Policy in the year 2002 wherein greater emphasis has been laid on promotion of eco-tourism whose parameters have been made broader than those of nature tourism. Eco-tourism must help in eliminating poverty, in ending unemployment, in creating new skills, in enhancing the status of women, in preserving cultural heritage, in encouraging tribal and local crafts and in improving overall environment and facilitating growth of a more just and fair social order.

The Government have also set up a National Committee on Eco-tourism and Mountains to work out details for managing the fragile Ecosystem and to consider projects/programmes for development of Eco-tourism In the country.

(c) and (d) Some of the State Governments like Sikkim, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra have implemented unique Eco-tourism projects in their States with assistance from Central Department of Tourism.